

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING	FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
MEETING DATE	22 DECEMBER, 2008
REPORT OF	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE & CLERK AND TREASURER
REPORT SPONSOR(S)	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & RESOURCES
SUBJECT	GREEN TRAVEL PLAN

SUMMARY

In 2007 the Fire Authority approved an Environmental Policy that has a main aim of reducing the organisation's CO² emissions. In order to set a benchmark from which future improvements could be measured consultants have been employed to measure the current carbon footprint of South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR). The finalised report will be available in the near future. However, initial indications are that commuting by staff either to and from work and/or due to business travel could represent between 25% to 50% of the overall carbon footprint of the organisation. The proposals contained within the attached Green Travel Plan (GTP) aims to reduce CO² emissions due to this activity.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Members are recommended to:-

- (a) Note the report and approve the Green Travel Plan.
- (b) Approve the use of £100,000 as described in the report for progressing Green Travel Plan initiatives.

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Main Report

Appendix A - Proposed Green Travel Plan

BACKGROUND

1. In 2007 the Fire Authority approved an Environmental Policy that has a main aim of reducing the organisation's CO² emissions. In order to set a benchmark from which future improvements could be measured, consultants have been employed (URS) to undertake a range of environmental work which includes measuring the current carbon footprint of SYFR. The finalised report will be available in the near future and will form the subject of a separate report to this Authority at a later date. However, initial indications are that commuting by staff either to and from work and/or due to business travel could represent between 25% to 50% of the overall carbon footprint of the organisation. While this figure may be representative of a typical Fire Service (benchmarking results awaited), it is without doubt a large proportion of the overall footprint and is likely to be highly sensitive to measures that aim to reduce it. The proposals contained within the attached GTP aims to reduce CO² emissions due to this activity.
2. In order to measure progress in delivering this over-riding objective, it is proposed that the following performance indicators will be used:-
 - **Total mileage claimed monthly**
 - **Annual results from a staff travel survey**
 - **The take up numbers for each particular scheme**
3. The targets that wished to be achieved will need to be established once the full carbon footprint results are known, although the general titles are likely to be:-
 - **X% reduction in CO² emissions (linked to Environmental Policy key target)**
 - **X% reduction in average monthly mileage claimed by XX**
 - **X% reduction in the number of staff travelling to work alone by car by XX**
 - **X % increase in walking and cycling journeys by XX**
 - **X% increase in the use of alternative modes of transport by XX**
4. The GTP outlined in appendix A has been based upon initial proposals prepared for SYFR by Hammersons UK Ltd who are the main contractors for the new headquarters building at Eyre Street. This was required as part of a planning condition for the new development. The GTP includes initiatives that are comparable to many other large public sector organisations. The intention is to adopt these principles on an organisational wide basis and seek to actively progress the initiatives contained within the GTP. This could be achieved by the use of up to £100,000 from the car parking compensation sum connected with the CHQ move to Eyre Street, subject to Members' approval.

5. As will be noted in appendix A, the GTP contains a mixture of initiatives that will require some funding in order to progress actively, combined with activities that aim to provide improvements through better education of alternative means of travel. The following summarises those initiatives that will require more than nominal funding:-

Cycle to Work Scheme

6. This is effectively a tax efficient salary sacrifice scheme which aims to encourage the use of cycles for journeys to and from work. Employees would be able to select a cycle from an approved supplier which would then be purchased by SYFR at a price exclusive of VAT. The cycle is then rented to the employee for a period of normally 12-18 months with the rental payment deducted from the employee's salary before the deduction of tax. At the end of the scheme the employee has an opportunity to purchase the cycle at a low residual value.
7. At present a staff survey is being undertaken to establish interest in the scheme. It is proposed that part of the £100,000 could be used to forward fund the purchase of the cycles the cost of which would be recouped via the rental payments. Costs such as the provision of cycle security posts at premises would be met from current property repair and maintenance budgets.

Public Transport

8. Initial consultation with the Transport Executive has indicated that staff discount schemes may be available to encourage staff to switch from using cars to public transport. SYFR may further reduce initial cost by subsidising a percentage of the monthly/annual cost. This may be linked to the car parking policy whereby a subsidy is provided in return for staff giving up their off-site car parking space. At present it is not possible to establish possible cost without knowing the degree of interest in such a scheme. However, the cost would be limited by the overall £100,000 sum available and if linked to the release of car parking space could be recouped by the savings in future car parking charges.

Car Sharing

9. Various car sharing options are already available. The majority either involve local arrangements between 2 or more individuals or more formally organised via a central registry of drivers who are prepared to share their vehicles. The main inhibitor in the usage of these schemes is the lack of flexibility of travel times and the security of knowing that a return journey will be guaranteed.
10. The majority of support staff have the benefit of flexible working hours at SYFR that should provide flexibility on car sharing times. To overcome the issue of securing a return journey if the car sharing failed due to various circumstances, organisations have provided a paid taxi service (subject to conditions). Again the popularity of such a scheme is unknown at SYFR at present although cost would be limited to within the initial overall allocated sum of £100,000.

Cycle Usage for Business Travel

11. Many organisations offer staff the opportunity to use cycles for business travel and claim a mileage allowance for this use, typically around 7-8 pence per mile. This type of scheme naturally aligns with the GTP encouraging non-car usage and helping to reduce congestion and Co2 emissions.
12. Further detailed work is required before a reliable estimate could be made of the revenue costs associated with this initiative as it would depend on anticipated staff usage and the agreed mileage rate. If following evaluation this initiative is considered for implementation, a budget bid for revenue funding would then be submitted at the appropriate time as part of the normal budget bid process.

Internal bus scheme

13. There may be an opportunity to establish pick-up/drop-off points for staff living within the Sheffield area that are based either at TDC or Headquarters. While SYFR does have 7 x no.8 seat minibuses they are dispersed throughout the County with only 3 x no. being based within Sheffield at TDC. Demand for usage is also high as they are regularly used for the transfer of staff who are attending training courses or detached duties etc. However, there may be scope for re-scheduling the usage of these buses, or alternatively hiring a vehicle specifically for this purpose, or indeed using 4 vito vehicles that are used by Community Fire Safety and provide 7 seats. The cost of this proposed initiative would need to be carefully assessed against the benefits arising from it which again could be linked to the release of car park spaces if required.

INITIAL INTEREST IN GREEN TRAVEL PLAN PROPOSALS

14. A limited survey of staff at CHQ was conducted during November, 2008 in order to gauge an approximate impact the initiatives would have on car usage. The sample size was restricted to those officers who have a car parking spaces allocated either on or off- site at Eyre Street. A 37 % response rate was achieved. The most popular initiative was:-
15. Subsidy of Public Transport of those responding 35% favoured this initiative.
 - o Those who did respond indicated a subsidy level of between 25-50% against the full ticket price would be required in order to persuade them to use public transport. In doing so almost all suggested this would remove their need to use a car for commuting on a regular basis.
 - o An average cost for a monthly public transport ticket using buses, tram, train within the Sheffield area costs approximately £60. Based on a 50% contribution yearly cost of subsidy per officer would be in the region of £360.
16. Car Sharing of those responding 30% favoured this initiative.
17. Internal Bus Scheme of those responding 25% favoured this initiative.

- Those who did respond were prepared to pay between £5-£10 per week for the use of the service. Again all suggested this would remove their need to use a car for commuting on a regular basis.
18. Remainder There was limited interest in cycle usage for business travel and the use of a vehicle via a car club arrangement.

Possible Implications for off-site car parking

19. Assuming those staff who did not respond were not interested in the GTP initiatives, the survey would indicate there could be potential of influencing 28 spaces (37% x 75 spaces). If this was linked directly to the cost of car parking at the Moors at £900/space per annum this equates to £25,200 per annum saving or over the anticipated procurement period of 6 years, £151,200.
20. As a comparison it will be noted above that yearly subsidy of a public ticket is approximately £360 which for 28 staff equates to £10,080 per annum.
21. It should be remembered that the main emphasis of any GTP is the reduction of CO² emissions and that reduction of car parking need is a secondary benefit. As a result it is proposed that all the above initiatives are developed and subject to a satisfactory feasibility outcome are implemented by using part of the £100,000 allocated subject to Members' approval, from the car parking compensation sum. Once this sum has been spent any additional funding, if required, would need to form the subject of a separate budget bid. Business rate for cycle usage, as indicated earlier would be the subject of a separate revenue bid as required.

NEXT STEPS

22. It is recognised that the GTP spans a number of different functions including Technical Services, Human Resources, Property Services, Corporate Communications, ICT, Occupational Health etc. As such, subject to Members', approval of the GTP, a project team would be established with representatives from each Directorate and operational District area, taking responsibility for specific initiatives with activity being co-ordinated by a designated Project Manager.
23. Key Milestones include:-
- Evaluate Carbon Footprint assessment
 - Complete assessment of current travel arrangements
 - Develop specific actions/measures
 - Provide update to Fire Authority as required
 - GTP measures fully implemented
 - Monitor progress

CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE PLAN COMMITMENTS

24. Commitment no.4 – Enterprise and Success (reduce energy consumption and waste and minimise our environmental ‘footprint’)

CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT

25. Local Area Agreements highlight the need to achieve CO² savings with our partners. Failure to meet this indirect statutory requirement would reflect negatively on the organisation and our LAA partners.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

26. The money available for investment in the GTP is limited to £100,000. Depending on the likely take up of individual initiatives, this will need to be carefully allocated. The availability of financial resources to sustain initiatives beyond the initial period will need to be considered as part of the project group work and this, together with the final allocation of the £100,000 will be reported to Members as part of the Authority’s monitoring processes.

IMPLICATIONS

27. Industrial Relations, Financial, Legal, Asset Management, Environmental and Sustainability, Diversity, and Local Area Agreement implications have been considered in compiling this report. Unless these are specifically mentioned above, none have been identified.

List of background documents		
Environmental Policy and Declaration of Commitment 2007		
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Appendix A - Travel Plan Initiatives for SYFRS

South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) is committed to reducing CO2 emissions that result from its activities as an organisation. In April, 2007 an Environmental Policy was approved that gave a commitment to reducing impact on the environment in eight key activity areas one of which involved Transport. SYFR impacts on the environment by using operational vehicles such as appliances but also by employees using private cars to journey to and from work and for business travel. The introduction of this Green Travel Plan is a means to reduce reliance on the private motor vehicle and to encourage alternative means of travel.

In order to measure progress in delivering this objective, it is proposed that the following performance indicators will be used:-

- **Total mileage claimed monthly**
- **Annual results from a staff travel survey**
- **The take up numbers for each particular scheme**

The targets that wished to be achieved are outlined as follows and have been established following a carbon footprint assessment that indicated that commuting amounted to .. % of SYFR's overall Carbon Footprint:-

- **X% reduction in CO² emissions (linked to Environmental Policy key target)**
- **X% reduction in average monthly mileage claimed by XX**
- **X% reduction in the number of staff travelling to work alone by car by XX**
- **X % increase in walking and cycling journeys by XX**
- **X% increase in the use of alternative modes of transport by XX**

Initiatives	Objective/Task	Action Leader	Associated Partners	Funding Required	Completion Date
Promotion of Green Travel Plan	Green Travel Information for staff and visitors on website.	ICT	Transport Agency (for info)		
	Green travel information included in induction packs for new staff.	HR	Corporate Comms (for design input)		
Cycling	Implement 'Cycle to Work' scheme.	Asset Man.	C2W provider	Y	
	Promote cycle routes.	Corporate Admin	SCC – Sheffield Cycle Map		
	Covered & secure cycle parking.	Property Services	Station Managers	Y	
	Run cycling 'refresher' courses.	tbc	C2W provider		
	Promote 'Cycle User' group. Useful tips and advice.	ICT	C2W provider		
	Promote health benefits of cycling.	Occ. Health	Corporate Comms		
Walking	Produce maps showing recommended walking routes from rail and bus stations to offices, with distance and time.	Corporate Admin	Local planning Authority	Y	
	Promote health benefits of walking.	Occ. Health	Corporate Comms		

	Personal attack alarms made available at reception areas and stations.	Procurement		Y	
Cloakrooms/Shower facilities	Make staff aware of the facilities available.	Property Services	Corporate Comms		
	Availability of a laundry service.	Procurement		Y	
Encourage use of public transport	Personalised journey planner.	Procurement	Transport Exec.	Y	
	Subsidised season tickets.	Procurement	Transport Exec.	Y	
	Promotional day.	Transport Exec.	Corporate Comms		
Encourage use of video and tele-conferencing	Promote awareness; provide guidelines and criteria for use.	ICT	IT supplier		
Visitors	Provision of clear 'How to get to' information, including details of bus, rail and tram facilities.	Corporate Admin	Corporate Comms and Transport Exec.		
Car sharing and car clubs	Preferential car share parking spaces identified.	Property Services			Complete
	Car sharing database – both internal and external.	ICT	Admin.		
	Taxi service as back up.	CMB / Admin.	Admin.	Y	
	Promote awareness of car clubs and investigate discount scheme for users.	Procurement	Local car clubs		

Business travel	Promote public transport and car sharing for business trips.	CMB / Procurement	Transport Exec.		
	Consider the introduction and payment of mileage rates for staff using cycles for business use.	HR		Y	
Fleet cars	Promotion – when and how to use them.	Tech. Services	Corporate Comms		
Internal bus scheme	Consider the feasibility of using Fleet/rental mini-bus for establishing staff pick-up/drop-off points during commute times.	Tech. Services		Y	